

Groups make arrangements to free Belgian, Swiss hostages

BEIRUT (R) — Final arrangements are underway to release a Belgian family kidnapped more than three years ago by Palestinians of Abu Nidal's Fateh Revolutionary Council (FRC), Palestinian sources said Tuesday.

They said a breakthrough had been made following talks by Belgian and Libyan officials and leaders of the FRC which holds Emmanuel Houtekins, his wife Godelieve and two children, Laurent and Valerie.

Three other members of the group, Frenchwoman Jacqueline Valente, her Belgian lover Fernand Houtekins and their daughter Sophie were freed by the FRC earlier this month following an appeal by Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi.

Valente's other two daughters were freed in December, 1988. The sources said a Belgian envoy, believed to be Jan Hollants van Loocke, Brussels' director general for political affairs, was holding talks in Tripoli, while Belgian ambassador to Lebanon Jan Kamp was a Libyan diplomat in Beirut and was contacting the FRC.

"The contacts were fruitful. The issue has matured and the final arrangements for the release of the four Belgians are underway," one source said. "Soon they will be free."

Van Loocke visited Beirut before Valente and Houtekins were

released to lay the ground for their freedom.

The FRC has demanded the release of one of its members imprisoned in Belgium, Nasser Said, who is serving a life sentence for an attack on a Jewish bus in Antwerp in 1980.

FRC spokesman Walid Khaled has said the Belgian government promised to release Said last year.

News of the possible release of the Belgians follows the freeing in Beirut Sunday of American hostage Robert Polhill, 35, after 1,183 days in the hands of the pro-Iranian Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine.

Lebanese and Palestinian officials were meanwhile holding a flurry of contacts in the southern Lebanese port city of Sidon Tuesday to secure the release of two kidnapped Swiss relief workers, security sources said.

Another 14 Westerners are believed still in the hands of pro-Iranian hostage-takers.

The talks in Sidon concentrated on the fate of Emmanuel Christen and Elio Enriquez who were working for the International Committee of the Red Cross

(ICRC) when they were abducted on Oct. 6, 1989, in Sidon 40 kilometres south of Beirut.

No group claimed responsibility for their abduction, but security sources said the two were believed held by the FRC.

Valente, her daughters and the Belgians were seized from their yacht the Silco in the eastern Mediterranean.

On Monday, Qadhafi appealed for the release of all hostages held by Muslims, as well as Palestinians detained by Israel.

Qadhafi singled out hostages "carrying out humanitarian services like members of the Red Cross."

Amid Western euphoria over the release of the U.S. hostage, Syria's official Al-Bath newspaper Tuesday urged Washington to remember the plight of Palestinians jailed in Israel.

"The cause of (Western hostages) should direct (U.S.) attention to the thousands of Palestinian prisoners in Zionist jails," the paper said.

"The hostage problem as a whole can be considered as part of the general framework of the (Middle East) conflict," it added.

Washington should adopt a neutral stance in the Arab-Israeli conflict, said the paper, the official organ of the ruling Baath Party.

In Washington, President George Bush telephoned Syrian

President Hafez Assad Monday to thank him for helping free Polhill and the White House said it was pressing for the unconditional release of seven Americans still held captive in Lebanon.

"The president... emphasised his strong interest in the fate of the remaining hostages and his hope that they would be released as soon as possible," said a White House statement about the phone call.

It said Bush had also called His Majesty King Hussein Monday "for a general discussion of Middle East issues." There was no further elaboration but it was announced in Amman that Bush had invited King Hussein to visit the United States this year.

One day after Polhill's release by pro-Iranian militants in Lebanon through Syrian intermediaries, U.S. officials expressed gratitude but stressed Washington's position that it wanted all hostages freed without conditions.

"The U.S. government continues to probe all sources of information about the hostages... that certainly is continuing now and becomes a slightly more concentrated effort anytime you have a release of hostages like this," White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said.

"We are not going to trade for our hostages," Fitzwater added.

Syrian envoy presents credentials to Mubarak

CAIRO (R) — Syria's first ambassador to Egypt in 13 years presented his credentials to President Hosni Mubarak Tuesday, officially ending years of enmity between the two Arab states.

The Syrian envoy, former Oil Minister Isa Darwish, held talks with Mubarak after the ceremony.

On Sunday Egyptian Ambassador Mustafa Abdul Aziz Mursi presented his credentials to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in Damascus.

Egypt and Syria simultaneously attacked Israeli lines in the 1973 Middle East war.

But Syrian-Egyptian diplomatic relations were broken in 1977, over Cairo's peace moves towards Israel.

Darwish declined to say when Mubarak would start a much-beset visit to Damascus, but officials said it would take place soon.

Jerusalem Armenians march on massacre anniversary

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — About 300 Armenians marched in Jerusalem's Old City Tuesday to mark the 75th anniversary of the massacre of more than a million Armenians under Ottoman Turkish rule.

Many of the marchers wore black and carried a banner that said: "1.5 million Armenians massacred by the Turks in 1915."

The marchers carried wreaths and candles as they walked from the walled Armenian Quarter to the city's nearby cemetery. Armenian Church Patriarch Torkom Manoogian, wearing a black hood and a crimson robe, led the procession.

Dozens of teenage marchers wore T-shirts emblazoned with the words "April 24, 1915," and many carried posters with such slogans as "End Turkish occupation of Armenia" and "struggle is born with every Armenian."

The campaign to exterminate the Armenians began late in the 19th century under Ottoman Sultan Abd Al Hamid II. It was stepped up in 1915 when the

Armenians were accused of helping Russian invaders during World War I.

The Turkish government has a different account of the Armenian deaths. Turkish officials maintain that between 300,000 and 600,000 Armenians died, most of famine or disease during forced deportation to Syria and Iraq.

George Hntlian, an Armenian church spokesman, said the community here would hold prayers and conferences all week and was still demanding Turkish recognition of the massacre.

March in Tehran

In Tehran thousands of Armenians marched to the United Nations office Tuesday. The Iranian News Agency (IRNA) reported.

It said the demonstrators marched from a church through the streets of Tehran to join another group of Armenians who had started a sit-in in front of the U.N. office Monday.

Havel to pass Arafat comments on to Israel

PRAGUE (R) — Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel will brief Israel on his talks with PLO leader Yasser Arafat this month during a three-day official visit beginning Wednesday, according to Czechoslovak officials.

"The president is of the opinion that Mr. Arafat's comments on the Middle East situation were not addressed to him alone and will try to reproduce his words as precisely as possible in his talks with Israeli officials," presidential spokesman Michal Zantovsky told a Monday news conference.

Havel will be the first East European head of state to visit Israel since its founding and his trip will mark a revival of close ties that existed between the two countries four decades ago.

In his talks with Havel during a two-day visit to Czechoslovakia earlier this month Arafat said the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) was willing to meet any Israeli officials on the basis of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's five-point plan for an Israel-Palestine dialogue as a preparatory step towards Middle East peace.

Zantovsky did not rule out a mediation role for Havel, but said: "It will of course depend on the Israeli side if they will want him to mediate."

Havel's visit follows the re-establishment of relations between the two countries last February after a break of 23 years.

Relations were severed by Czechoslovakia's Communist rulers during the 1967 Middle East war out of solidarity for Arab states and in concert with other East Bloc countries except Romania.

Last September Hungary was the first of the boycotting countries to re-establish relations with Israel, followed by Poland and Czechoslovakia. Israeli officials say Bulgaria will resume ties soon.

Czechoslovakia was one of the first countries to recognise newly created Israel in 1948.

Havel will meet Isaac Rabin, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and opposition Labour Party leader Shimon Peres and will address the Knesset.

He will also receive an honorary degree from the Hebrew University.

Meanwhile, a group of Palestinian students studying in Czechoslovakia has asked Havel to take them with him on his visit to Israel.

In an open letter to Havel, made available by the Palestine Liberation Organisation in Tunis, the students argued that they have a greater right to return than 24,000 Soviet Jews who have emigrated to Israel this year.

Ford reportedly backed Israel's retention of Golan

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Gerald Ford in 1975 secretly promised Israel the United States would seriously consider backing Israel's retention of Golan Heights territory captured from Syria, according to a report by an Israeli think tank.

The territory had been used before the 1967 Middle East war for Arab attacks on villages in northern Israel. It has served since then as a security buffer for the Jewish state, but Syria is demanding its return.

Ford, in a letter to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, said the United States had not decided what position to take on the borders between Israel and its

Israel risks alienating Christians over settlement

By Paul Taylor
Reuters

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — Israel, which already has a formidable list of foes in the Muslim World, seems bent on alienating major Christian communities by implanting a Jewish settlement in the heart of Jerusalem's Christian quarter.

The government has responded defiantly to protests from all Christian churches in the Holy Land and from the U.S. government over the settlement of 150 Jews in St. John's Hospice.

St. John's is near the holiest site in Christendom — the Church of Holy Sepulchre where Christians believe Christ was crucified and resurrected.

"It is the right of Jews to live everywhere and to purchase or rent property in all parts of the land of Israel, especially in Jerusalem," the Foreign Ministry said Monday.

The statement was issued a day after the Housing Ministry broke an 11-day silence and acknowledged it secretly paid \$1.8 million of taxpayers' money towards leasing the complex, owned by the Greek Orthodox Church.

It is the first time Jews have settled in the Christian quarter since Israel occupied the walled Old City of Jerusalem in the 1967 Middle East war.

The ministry, controlled by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's right-wing Likud Party, also appears to have blessed the highly unorthodox methods used to acquire the lease.

According to the family of the building's Armenian lessee, he was duped into selling to the lease

to a man purporting to be a devout Lebanese Christian, who turned out to be a front-man for the settlers.

A Panamanian straw company actually paid for the lease and is now fighting a rearguard action in the Israeli courts against the church's attempts to evict its unwanted tenants.

The cloak-and-dagger operation was carried out in Easter week, as Jerusalem was full of Christian pilgrims and tourists. It climaxed with the teargassing of clergymen demonstrating outside

Land announced Monday they would close Christian holy places in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth and Galilee next Friday in protest at the government-backed settlement.

The Greek Orthodox, Latin and Armenian Patriarchs, the Franciscan custos, the Coptic, Syrian and Ethiopian archbishops, the Anglican bishop, the Greek Catholic patriarchal vicar and the Lutheran provost all said the settlement "endangers the survival of all Christian communities in the holy city."

Israel's Religious Affairs Ministry accused the churches of a serious infringement of the status quo among the religious communities — precisely the charge the churches level against the settlers.

The row with the churches may even affect Christian tourism to Jerusalem, a major currency earner. Ironically Christian pilgrims continued to flock to Israel while Jewish tourism has been hit by the Palestinian uprising.

Palestinians say they are convinced the settlement is part of a long-term Israeli plan to drive them out of the Old City.

In their eyes, it began with the 1967 reconstruction of the former Jewish quarter in the Old City, where Arabs were banned by law from living, and continued with controversial settlements in recent years in the Muslim quarter.

The settlers themselves talk of building a "corridor of Jewish settlement" through the Old City from the Orthodox neighbourhood of Mea Shearim to the Wailing Wall, Judaism's holiest site.

Afghan rebel leader hints at compromise with Kabul

PESHAWAR (R) — Afghan guerrilla leader Sibghatullah Mojaddidi hinted Tuesday that Mujahedeen Muslim fighters might be prepared to compromise with the Soviet-backed government in Kabul over a political settlement.

Mojaddidi, president of the Afghan rebel government in exile, told a news conference that if he were sincere about peace, President Najibullah should step down before elections.

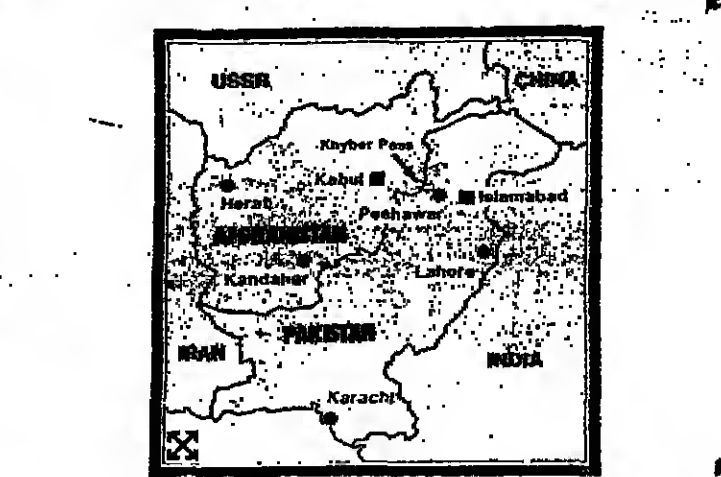
"If this becomes reality a joint commission from both sides can be appointed to do the needful," he said.

Up to now the guerrillas based in Pakistan have adamantly refused any deal with Najibullah, but Mojaddidi said: "If he becomes a good Muslim then we will allow him to participate in the elections."

The United States and the Soviet Union, the main backers of the two sides in the Afghan conflict, have been talking about an interim commission that would organise elections but have become stuck on whether Najibullah should have any role.

The United States and the Afghan Mujahedeen want him to step down at the beginning of any peace process while Moscow is insisting he remain in power while elections are organised.

Mojaddidi confirmed that the guerrilla leadership was discussing proposals for internationally supervised elections to a Loya Jirga, a traditional grand council,



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in both government-held and Mujahedeen-held areas. On Monday the rebel government denied Pakistan press reports that an accord had already been reached and the 11-year-old war was all but over.

Under the plan being promoted by moderate guerrilla leader Syed Ahmad Gailani, the Jirga would draft a new constitution and organise general elections.

not as categorical as the Israelis would have liked," said the former official, insisting on anonymity. "It sympathizes with the Israeli position without binding us to it fully and without prejudging the outcome."

The main conclusion of the study was that establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and in Gaza, territories also would pose a danger to the Jewish state.

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MIDDLE EAST NEWS BRIEFS

Velayati ready for Gulf peace talks

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said Monday he was ready for resumed Gulf peace talks whenever Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar wished, but accused Iraq of raising difficulties. "We are ready to start peace talks any time that Mr. Perez de Cuellar decides. But you can see that the other side, the Foreign Minister of Iraq, has created some difficulties in the way of the talks for the implementation of the (U.N. peace) resolution," he told Reuters. Velayati and his Iraqi counterpart, Tariq Aziz, last met in Geneva a year ago to try to transform an August 1988 Gulf war ceasefire into a permanent settlement based on a 1987 Security Council resolution. The secretary general is trying to arrange a new round of meetings between the two ministers, possibly next month. Velayati, here for a special General Assembly session on international economic cooperation, said he had expected Aziz also to come to New York.

Nearly 29,000 Jewish immigrants arrive

TEL AVIV (AP) — Minister of Immigration and Absorption has said that 28,740 immigrants have arrived to Israel so far this year and that nearly 25,000 of them were from the Soviet Union, Israel Radio reported. Minister Yitzhak Peretz was quoted as giving the figures to members of a government inter-ministerial committee coordinating immigrant absorption. Peretz said the rate of immigration from the Soviet Union was increasing and that temporary housing needed to be set up until permanent quarters could be built, the radio said. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Monday that 24,200 immigrants were from the Soviet Union, Israel Television said.

UAE president to visit Indonesia

ABU DHABI (R) — United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zaid Ibn Sultan Al Nahayan will visit Indonesia from May 19 to 23 after trips to China and Japan, the official UAE News Agency (WAM) said Tuesday.

Battle erupts in Algerian mosque

ALGIERS (R) — Several people were wounded during a pitched battle inside a mosque in a western Algerian town when the mayor, up for re-election in June, led an attack on opponents, the Algerian News Agency (APS) has said. APS said the battle erupted in Sebaa Chioch, near Tlemcen, when rivals, armed with knives and clubs, clashed during religious celebrations marking the night of destiny (Lailat al Qadr), the 27th night of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan last Saturday. "The town council president entered the mosque and asked his friends... to fight the people inside, triggering a pitched battle and profaning this divine place," APS said.

Hawke opens mission in Istanbul

ISTANBUL (R) — Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke, in Turkey to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign, has inaugurated an Australian consulate in Istanbul, Turkey's largest city. Hawke, who held official contacts in Ankara Monday before travelling to Istanbul, told reporters Tuesday that the consulate was needed to help handle an increasing volume of work as ties developed between Turkey and Australia. More than 150,000 Turkish immigrants live in Australia.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 72111-19

PROGRAMME ONE
15:30 Koran
15:40 Programme review
15:45 Children's programme
17:30 Educational programme
18:00 News summary in Arabic
18:05 Cairo news message
18:30 Local programme
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Arabic series
21:30 Arabic programme
22:00 News in Arabic
22:30 Play

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 La Valise en Carton
19:00 News in French
19:15 Documentary
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Laura and Disorder
21:10 Horseman Riding by "A Birth and a Death"
22:00 News in English
22:30 Alice to Nowhere

PRAYER TIMES

03:28 Fajr
04:52 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:34 Dhur
15:12 'Asr
18:15 Maghrib
19:34 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweileh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 623366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625453
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 713311
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 713261
St. Egidius Church Tel. 717151
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be hot, dry and dusty and winds will be southeasterly moderate freshening at times. In Aquaba, winds will be northerly fresh and sea wavy.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammad Al Sawwa 731429
Dr. Ahmad Al Hawndah 77665
Dr. Ahmad Othman 786394
Dr. Asaf Al Ashab 602507
First Pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asana pharmacy 670555
Naironk pharmacy 623672
Al Salem pharmacy 636730
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مكتبة الامم المتحدة



THE HOLY MONTH OF Ramadan has come to an end. The month-long event was another occasion for Muslims to prove their faith and empathise with the poor. El Masakar, the one who wakes us up every night with his drum, will pass to collect his dues. The poor will be treated with their share of money. Housewives will show one more time their skills in the culinary art to the family gathered around the table (maybe the nicest thing about Ramadan) and, the biggest event of them all, everybody will be shopping for 'Eid. New clothes, toys, coffee (for the traditional black coffee), sweets. The marketplaces will be once again bustling with activity (to the shopkeepers' delight) and then things will revert to natural.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince Hassan meets Patriarch Sabbah

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday received the Patriarch of the Roman Catholic church Michel Sabbah and reviewed with him the current situation in Jerusalem following the Zionist attack on the Roman Catholic Patriarch and the occupation by Israeli settlers of Saint John's Hospice in Jerusalem. The talks also dealt with the continuing suffering of the Palestinians in the occupied Arab territories as a result of the oppressive Israeli measures. Prince Hassan stressed the importance of achieving complete coordination and cooperation between Muslim and Christian institutions to safeguard the holy Islamic and Christian places and the Arab property in Jerusalem. The meeting was attended by President of Bethlehem University Monsignor Raouf Najjar.

Prime minister receives ambassadors

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Mudar Badran received Tuesday the ambassadors of Algeria, the Soviet Union, Japan and Sudan to Jordan bilateral relations between Jordan and these countries were reviewed in the separate meetings.

Arar to visit West Germany

AMMAN (J.T.) — At the invitation of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Federal Republic of Germany, a six-member delegation to the Lower House of Parliament led by its speaker, Saleman Arar, will pay a visit to the Federal Republic of Germany, from May 5th to 15th, 1990. On the programme are meetings with the president of the Bundestag (Federal Lower House) and the chairman of several of its committees, with the president of the Bundestag (Federal Upper House), high-ranking personalities in the Federal Chancellery and in the Federal Government, and visits to Mainz, capital of the Federal Land of Rhineland-Palatinate (parliament and government), as well as to Berlin (West and East).

Economic crimes draft law not finalised

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Salem Masaadeh, who is also chairman of the special legal committee, formed by the Prime Ministry to formulate the draft economic sanctions act, Tuesday said the draft had not been finalised and the committee would be called to discuss the ideas and proposals put forward to the Prime Ministry. Masaadeh was referring to an article published in the Arabic daily Al-Dustour in April 16, which said that the draft economic sanctions act had been finalised. He said the newspaper had published a proposed working paper, which was not approved by the ad hoc committee, in charge of enacting the legislations on economic crimes.

Muslim society invites Shbeilat to U.S.

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament member Laith Shbeilat will leave next Saturday to the United States on a several-day visit upon an invitation from the Muslims of North America Society. Shbeilat will deliver a series of lectures and participate in seminars in several cities of the U.S. Shbeilat is expected to talk about the parliamentary experience in Jordan at the Arab-American leaderships conference which will convene in Washington between May 10 and 12.

Jordan to attend talks on environment

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in a conference on the Mediterranean Sea environment to start in Cyprus Wednesday.

The four-day conference will discuss the issue of discarding in the sea waste which threatens marine life and breaches agreements signed in the field. Jordan was invited to the conference in its quality of a country that could be affected by the Mediterranean environment and as one of the member states in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden Pact which aims at conserving the environment. Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Karim Al Dughni left AMMAN for Cyprus Tuesday to represent Jordan in the conference.

Jopetrol exports rose against imports

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Petroleum Refinery company has set a record of sales of locally produced engine and lubricating oils versus imported oil, according to a spokesman for the company. The source said the refinery had sold 17,358,815 tonnes of engine and lubrication oil, against 7,572,781 tonnes of imported oil, thus export getting a share of 70 per cent of the total sales, compared to 30 per cent import. The sources attributed the increase in the sales of Jopetrol oil to the trust Jordanian citizens have in the high quality of Jopetrol oils. The price of Jopetrol oil is 30 per cent to 50 per cent less than the price of imported oil.

21 run for election in Kralmeih

NORTH JORDAN VALLEY (Petra) — A total of 21 contestants are running in the elections of Kralmeih municipal council to take place May 5. Kralmeih area has an electorate of 5,235 people.

Karak celebrates Earth Day

KARAK (Petra) — Karak cooperatives department Tuesday celebrated Earth Day. The society organised a programme of activities which aimed at acquainting the public with the dangers of environmental pollution and its effect on people, animals and plants. The programme which was held in cooperation with cooperative societies and youth clubs in Karak governorate included films and lectures.

Cooperative to boost women's role

TAFILEH (Petra) — A multi-purpose cooperative society has recently been established in Tafileh to help women find jobs and highlight their role in the overall socio-economic development of the governorate. The cooperative seeks to advance the status of women, by giving them chance to engage in productive and income-generating projects, and providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills to set up small projects, requiring low capital but having high feasibility.

Exhaust fumes tested

AMMAN (Petra) — Air Pollution Department at the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) in cooperation with drivers and vehicles Licensing Department examined fumes coming out of vehicles exhausts. The primary results of the tests showed that some fumes were harmful to health and to the environment. One of the most important factors that contributes to increasing exhaust fumes is the lack of periodic maintenance to the vehicle's engine. The experiment comes as part of RSS celebrations of Earth Day.

Budget for Musheirfa approved

KARAK (Petra) — Karak acting governor Mazen Al 'Ounran approved the budget of Al Musheirfa municipal council. The budget is worth JD 10,000.

Civil Service Commission follows up reinstatement

AMMAN (Petra) — The Civil Service Commission's President Khalid Radaideh Tuesday said the commission had received 307 requests for reinstatement from civil servants who had been dismissed from their posts for political reasons. He said the commission, in implementation of the government's decision to reinstate civil servants, had prepared a list with their names and submitted it to the Prime Ministry requesting their reinstatement in accordance with the civil service regulation in force.

He pointed out that the number of requests received by the commission does not include those who were dismissed from their jobs with the Ministry of Education.

"However a total of 91 out of 307 applicants have got the green light for reinstatement," he said. Radaideh also said that the number of people who applied for reinstatement at the Ministry of Education was 293 and that out of this number 191 had already been reinstated.

He voiced the commission's keen interest in directing special attention to those people and pledged to find a solution for their problem before the end of the year.

Banking symposium calls for more banks' involvement in Arab economy

AMMAN (Petra) — The Arab Banks Union has called on all Arab banks to contribute to easing the burden of Arab indebtedness, financing trade and assisting in developing Arab capital, which will, in turn, enhance the role of banks in easing indebtedness and increasing commercial exchange.

At a specialised symposium held recently in Cairo the union called for adhering to the criteria laid down by Pal International Committee. The criteria lay the foundations for calculating and determining the capital adequacy ratio.

Director of the Arab Institute of Banking studies Adnan Al Hindi, who has just come back from Cairo, said the union adopted a number of recommendations designed to address the negative aspects of Pal committee decisions on capital adequacy ratio.

He added that the symposium called on the Arab Monetary Fund to prepare the necessary studies for developing the Arab capital and requested the board of governors of the Central Arab Banks and the Arab Monetary Corporations to draw up a programme for financing inter-Arab trade.

The Deputy President, Dr. Tareq Suheimat then briefed the meeting on the objectives of the society and said it aims at helping poor patients, after conducting a social survey of their financial status. It also entails helping patients who require the aid of private doctors but cannot afford it and are not covered by medical insurance.

The society will also coordinate with hospitals, doctors and health centres to ensure that the needy and poor patients receive the necessary treatment at these public institutions. During the meeting, the committee discussed means of providing funds for the society. It will mainly depend on proceeds from social activities as well as donations from foreign and domestic missions.

It was also decided to form a follow-up committee, to provide the administrative committee, which comprises doctors of various specialities, with up-to-date reports.

Hindi said the criteria was unfair because it helps the governments, institutions and banks in the industrialised world to obtain low cost funds, thus contributing to the unfair distribution of financial resources and adversely affecting the flow of funds to the Third World countries.

Marketing yourself? Local firm says it can show you how

By Hana Darwazah
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "How to market yourself in the work force." One would think the ad comes from an American newspaper. It is not, it was found in our local papers.

An enterprising marketing company, "Push Marketing Company" has come up with a novel idea of offering courses dealing with contemporary practical topics, such as marketing oneself in the work force and the scientific approach to rid oneself of psychological pressure in work and in life.

Trying to keep abreast of market trends, the Push Marketing Company decided to offer courses in sales and marketing, plus the new notion of offering courses that help convert nervousness into positive energy.

"We all get butterflies in our stomachs at one time or another, what we try to do is

help people manage these butterflies and convert them into a positive force pushing outwards," Nafae' Abu Nab, the company's president and chief executive officer told the Jordan Times in an interview.

Abu Nab, who worked his way through college in the U.S., selling door to door educational books, believes there are no disadvantages, only facts, and one's perception of them. This positive attitude is what he tries to convey to his students.

According to Abu Nab, the courses, which have started on a wide scale this year, have met with a favourable response. In fact, some courses, such as sales and marketing had to be expanded to three sections because of high demand.

Most of the people who enroll in the company's courses are unemployed graduates in their twenties and early thirties with an occasional older person. What they all have in

common is a desire to find employment. Some students who were interviewed agreed that they were furthering their chances of finding employment.

The Push Marketing Company "tries to connect things for people," Abu Nab told the Jordan Times. We offer people what they cannot do on their own, we specialise in services. There is a joke about a blind man who wants to tell his deaf friend about the death of the latter's father, a difficult prospect at best. Push Marketing Company can help in such difficult situations," Abu Nab said.

Launched in August 1988, the company does feasibility studies, helps other companies market their products in Jordan and abroad, tries to help its students find suitable employment, does consultancy work, and specialises in marketing services.

Abu Nab believes the youth are Jordan's main asset. "This sector of the population, with

proper education and training, can help the country's economy tremendously, and is the hope for the future," he says. He adds that there is a need to get away from the centralised figure of the general manager, who holds the absolute power of decision-making and responsibilities.

Abu Nab believes that in order to function effectively, companies should delegate responsibilities to well educated and properly trained young people, thus giving them incentive to become self-motivated. This is where pushing marketing and other training institutions can play a vital role.

Push Marketing Company is offering several courses which last one to two weeks. The prices range from JD 10-25. Those interested can visit and sit in at one of the courses to get a general idea free of charge. The courses are offered periodically according to demand.

ACC urges better oil use

(Continued from page 1)

meeting here last February.

The meeting also called for the cooperation of oil-producing states in maintaining stability in the international oil market to safeguard development programmes and economic planning in these countries.

The four ministers, who met Monday with His Majesty King Hussein, and Prime Minister Mudar Badran, and on Sunday with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan strongly condemned the West for the "organised and hostile campaign launched by enemies of the Arab Nation against Iraq, which is only seeking to achieve strategic balance through scientific and technological progress."

Later, Tuesday, the Jordanian minister told journalists that the meeting agreed to set up five groups of experts "to translate the (February) agreement into a programme of action."

Taher said the specialised working groups would tackle all aspects of oil and gas cooperation and production, oil refining, manufacturing oil-related equipment, training and exchange of expertise.

The minister told a press conference that a timetable was set for the working groups to complete their respective plans of

action towards the implementation of the ACC agreement.

Responding to questions about the fluctuation of international oil prices, Taher said Arab oil-producing states need to cooperate within (OPEC) the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries towards achieving greater stability in crude oil prices through adhering to specified production quotas.

He said that the failure of OPEC member states to adhere to production quotas would harm Arab economies.

"Arab states would be the first to lose in case of a shock to the oil market," Taher asserted. "But if we properly use the oil weapon," he added, "we would carry a bigger weight through a united position."

Settlers

(Continued from page 1)

right after Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967.

In the West Bank town of Jenin, masked youths hurled bottles at army patrols, blocked streets and hoisted Palestinian flags, residents said.

Palestinian sources in the town said border police severely beat an Arab child and forced him to drink urine.

Accord reached in principle

(Continued from page 1)

told reporters that Jordan and Iraq had signed an agreement under which the Iraqi government would help the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) in oil exploration.

The agreement, which will be renewed automatically every year, also stipulates that Iraq will offer technical assistance to Jordan in the areas of oil exploration, geological studies, oil drilling, geological studies, exchange of expertise and training. Taher said Iraq would also provide Jordan with drilling equipment and other

machinery used in oil exploration.

Jordan has found gas in the Al Rishah area in the Kingdom's northeastern desert border with Iraq with an estimated reserve of 400 billion cubic metres. So far, oil has been discovered in minimal quantities, with production between 300 and 400 barrels per day compared with a daily consumption of 60,000 barrels. Several international oil companies have concessions for oil exploration in the Kingdom, but none has so far reported discovery of commercial quantities.

Representatives

(Continued from page 1)

risks for peace, they need to know the United States will stand by them, not pull the rug out from under them."

But representative David Obey said any attempt by Congress to give formal support to Israel's claim that Jerusalem is its capital would unnecessarily inflame an already hostile situation.

"For America to play constructive role, we need to have good relations with a number of parties in the Middle East, not just one... we must be credible to all parties, not just one."

And Obey said the non-binding

resolution was nothing more than "an institutional press release."

Representative David Bonior said Congress should be debating the Likud party's aid to Jewish settlers in the Christian sector of Jerusalem "while lying, lying about the action."

He also said lawmakers should be discussing the wisdom of approving \$400 million in loan guarantees to house new settlers.

The resolution is "an affront to the Arab community, the Christian community and the Greek Orthodox community... we should be seeking to bring the parties together instead of polarising the situation," Bonior said.

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Executions are not the answer

IT WAS quite ironic for Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir, the Sudanese military leader, to swiftly execute 28 officers for trying to do exactly what he himself did a year ago — seize power. At a first glance, the obvious difference is that Bashir succeeded in his bid when he took power in a bloodless coup which ousted the democratically-elected government of Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi last year. But this is not the only difference. For unlike his former colleague Abdul Rahman Swarredahab, Bashir, it seems, has no plans to step down and hand over power to a democratic government, as he indeed made clear on Monday.

While democracy flourishes elsewhere in the world, the notion of tolerance for opposition and dissent seems to have missed Sudan's military regime which appears intent on keeping the strings of power and ruling the strife-torn, famine-stricken and disaster-laden country. The fact that 28 officers, some of them senior retired servicemen, were executed in cold blood is a clear indication that opposition to the 15-member military council headed by Bashir is not all that weak. Another indication of a significant opposition is that the plotters were executed after summary trials without the due process of the law.

To begin with, there can be no justification whatsoever to the decision to execute the dissidents. The capture of the "plotters," who had clearly not fired a single shot, would have been enough to abort the coup. Furthermore, the use of execution as a method of governing violates the very values which make any regime worth protecting. The Sudanese general, if not for the sake of human rights, then for the sake of his credibility as a leader who claims to have been seeking dialogue with dissidents and opposition figures in his country, would have been wiser to have thought twice before the executions. The fact that the execution of 28 officers comes after a series of earlier executions, sometimes for small or unsubstantiated offences and crimes, means that everything is not well with our Sudanese brothers. That sister country of ours needs no more bloodshed to achieve stability and security and much needed progress. It certainly does not need another Jaafar Numeiri to ruin what is left of it. What Sudan urgently needs is a solid step towards true popular participation and democracy in governing themselves and running the affairs of their country. Eastern Europe and other Third World countries, including Jordan, have taken giant leaps forward in this regard. Why not Sudan, and why not all the other countries that still choose to ignore the basic principles of democratic rule and government?

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i daily on Tuesday cast doubts on the possibility of the formation of an Israeli government led by Shimon Peres, the Labour leader, and said that his success on the whole was not bound to lead to an Israeli withdrawal from Arab lands. The paper said that failure by Shamir's party to lead a coalition government is bound to pave the way for the extremist elements in the Likud bloc to lead Israel in a course opposed to any peace in the region. The paper noted that such development, which is quite imminent will not doubt lead to further tension and the creation of an explosive situation in the Middle East. Indeed, no Israeli leader can commit his group to permanent peace since talk about peace with the Arabs is considered a crime within the Israeli society which is oriented towards aggression and expansion, the paper added. The paper expected Yitzhak Shamir to be entrusted with the formation of a new government in Israel with the help of the religious parties which had deceived Shimon Peres into believing in their good intentions and support for his own efforts to lead a government. In view of the this situation, the paper said, it seems unreasonable for the Arabs to remain impassive and incapable of taking some action before it is too late.

The release of an American hostage from Lebanon is regarded by Tareq Masarweh as the beginning of the resumption of full collaboration between Iran and the United States in all matters directed against the Arab Nation. The columnist says that Iran has secured the release of Robert Polhill in Beirut where its own groups had been biding in a show of reconciliation between Washington and Tehran, because the latter cannot help collaborating with the United States to achieve its own ends and to seek more allies in the West, working against the Arabs in general and Iraq in particular. The writer notes that Iran is only by name registered as member in the Islamic Organisation Conference and the Non-Aligned Movements, and has done nothing to help the Palestinians in their fight against Israeli occupation, despite its bragging about such help all the time. He notes that Iran is involved in criminal activities in Beirut and southern Lebanon, and is doing all it can to abort Arab agreements on reconciliation in Lebanon. The writer says that Tehran is ready to extend a hand to Washington and other allies including Israel as long as they can help it maintain its hostility for the Arabs and achieve by political means what it had failed to achieve by force.

Al Dustour daily newspaper on Tuesday commented on the joint Islamic-Christian action in Jerusalem and the consensus on closing all holy places in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth in protest against Israel's practices against the holy places in occupied Palestine. The paper said that the decision was a clear and loud cry to the Christian world and an appeal to the Christians and Muslims all over the world to come to the help of the Palestinian people trying to defend their holy shrines. The decision clearly proves that Israel is in no power to protect but only to desecrate these holy places with the help of the Jewish settlers and with backing from official circles in Israel and in the West, the paper continued.

Economic Forum

Currency devaluation: Myth and fact

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

CURRENCY devaluation is one of the weapons of economic policy but can really be a lethal one if not handled with extreme care. Otherwise, it stands a very good chance of backfiring as it usually does in developing countries.

In advanced countries, the story is different. The basic aim of devaluation is to improve the external sector through checking imports and boosting exports. An advanced country cannot afford to achieve that through direct control of its external trade without risking trade war with other great economic powers and therefore cannot get away with this policy. The alternative is currency devaluation which, under the prevailing international system of floating exchange rates, takes the form of letting the currency depreciate. Because its currency is freely convertible, an advanced country will still be able to use its weakened, or de-

valued, currency to settle its international transactions and does not face a foreign exchange bottleneck.

The case of a developing country is drastically different. The devaluation sparks waves of speculation against its currency and thus triggers capital flight. Artificial supply of local currency and artificial demand for foreign currencies, that is demand and supply not justified by actual economic transactions, are created and lead to further pressures on the local currency which is devalued again and again. In the process, foreign exchange reserves are run down and thereafter the developing country faces the staying dilemma of foreign exchange shortage. The absence of nationwide economic discipline and the consequent absence of a mechanism to control prices lead to inflation not only through the understandable instant increase in

import prices but also through the unjustifiable and unproportionate markup of the prices of domestic inputs in the absence of that mechanism. This erodes the price advantage emanating from devaluation, which is supposed to be enjoyed by exports. The measure has backfired.

The Jordanian dinar was devalued in 1988. As is customary with currency devaluation in developing countries, the initial devaluation led to over-devaluation. It was assumed that the dinar was "overvalued" by up to 20 per cent but the "freed" dinar sank by around 40 per cent to 70 per cent. At 670 fils for the US dollar, the present dinar is worth half its 1987 dollar value (and forget now about its purchasing power). The insistent talk about an overvalued dinar and the accompanying rumours regarding its imminent devaluation in the pre-

1988 era created an artificial demand for foreign currencies in anticipation of devaluation and this helped to deplete our foreign exchange reserves. When devaluation struck, those rumours had been substantiated and triggered a massive supply of dinars against foreign currencies. The dinar collapsed far beyond the "overvaluation" mark specified by devaluation mongers. That collapse was responsible for the sharp rise in living costs, which was in turn the main reason responsible for 1989-April riots.

We have kept on preaching the wisdom and crucial need for making the due distinction between developed (i.e. advanced) and developing (i.e. less developed) countries when tailoring economic policy prescriptions. To overlook the difference between these two categories and ask, or expect, a developing economy to behave and act like an advanced one

can be likened to asking a child to perform the tasks of a man. Currency devaluation is a glaring, but sad, example.

Some observers and officials maintain that the devaluation of the Jordanian dinar is working. Every Jordanian citizen sincerely hopes so. But the trouble with this judgement is that it is supported by a very strange evidence, namely our export performance. The main piece of evidence widely and wildly quoted here is the growth rate of our domestic exports. It has been said that these exports rose by 12 per cent in dollar terms in 1989 (i.e. after devaluation) and that this growth testifies to the success of devaluation. But hold on. In 1988, that is before devaluation, our domestic exports rose by 30.5 per cent (in dollar terms). Adjust this percentage for the 1988 exchange rate fluctuations and you still come up with a rate much

healthier than the widely and widely quoted rate of 1989. In 1987, domestic exports managed to grow at 10 per cent without the power of devaluation.

It is not our intention to dwell now on the arithmetic of devaluation, but we must mention that 1989 export performance was fully attributed to phosphate and potash exports which are priced in dollars and have nothing to do with devaluation. Put aside this category of exports and you will find that the rest of exports actually shrank at a substantial rate in 1989!

All this reminds me of a leading article published by The Wall Street Journal on May 5, 1989, in which the author wrote: "History is replete with nations that have ruined themselves by devaluing their currencies in an attempt to expand their exports."

Tolerance is needed on both sides

The Soviet Union's Middle East policy has varied from unconditional support of only Israel to unconditional support of only the Arabs. Dmitry Zgersky, writing in the Moscow-based New Times, reviews the relationship.

WHAT is written in our books about the founding of the state of Israel is accepted by us as plain and indisputable truth: all of the blame lies with British imperialism and world Zionism. In his book, "The Palestine Problem and the Middle East Crisis," published in 1981, Vladimir Kiselyov writes for instance: "The hasty proclamation of the state of Israel on Palestinian territory was like adding fuel to the flames. The Arab League immediately urged its members to dispatch regular troops to Palestine for repulsing the Zionist invasion."

Leading through Pravda's back copies

One may, naturally, ask: "Why did the Soviet Union recognise the Zionist aggressors and support the idea of establishing the state of Israel?" None of the present writers provides a convincing answer to this question. In any case, what they say is utterly incomprehensible, in my opinion.

My curiosity was excited by veteran diplomats and journalists who claimed that Stalin was very interested in the founding of the state of Israel. According to them, Stalin said, in a conversation with Tito, that he viewed Israel as a pain in the imperialists' neck and therefore permitted a mass emigration of Jews to Palestine and even organised the training of officers for the Israeli army.

I rummaged through the New Times library archives, but found no material about that period. The only thing I learned was that the material was destroyed, as it had been prescribed in the secret lists sent by the censors. Such lists were regularly sent to the magazine, and books and other periodicals were burned in turn when the need arose to rewrite history in a new way. Strangely enough, the Pravda files have remained.

It was unusual to read 40-year-old news. In Palestine, the situation developed from worse to bad. The Jews informed the world of Arab atrocities. It is possible that the Arabs reported on atrocities committed by Jews, in the same manner, though I did not find news of this kind in Pravda. But it is one thing when the Deir Yassin massacre is described by Menachem Begin in his memoirs as a brutal provocation of Arab soldiers, in which peaceful villagers died, and it is another thing when the events in Palestine are described in Pravda from the same positions.

The Soviet Union backed the idea of dividing Palestine in accordance with the U.N. resolution. The Jews agreed to such a division, which retained Jerusalem's international status. On May 15, 1948, Israel was pro-

claimed an independent state, and on the same day it was invaded by seven Arab states: Trans-Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Egypt.

Here is what Pravda wrote on May 30, 1948: "The leaders of the notorious Arab League do not conceal that the aim of military operations undertaken by Arab states is to destroy the state of Israel. Arab states are trying by armed force to prevent the Jewish people of Palestine from exercising their right to national self-determination, to their independent statehood. The actions of Arab countries can be described only as an unprovoked aggression encroaching on the Jewish people's lawful rights and flouting the basic principles of the U.N. Charter."

"Also untenable is the argument of the Arab League leaders that the Arab countries' crusade against the Jewish state has the aim of 'restoring the law and order' in Palestine and removing the 'threat' posed by the newly founded state of Israel to the Arab peoples. To depict several hundreds of thousands of Israelis as 'threat' to millions of Arabs living in the Middle East means to defy facts and common sense."

On March 3, 1949, Jacob Malik, the Soviet delegate to the United Nations, made the following statement: "As it is well known, the Israeli government is a peace-loving government, which loyally complied with the U.N. requirements, in particular, with the Security Council order... Statements have been made on the Arab refugee problem. But why should the state of Israel be blamed for the existence of that problem?"

Let's compare these quotations with what Nikita Khrushchev said in the Supreme Soviet (parliament) on Dec. 29, 1955. "It is necessary to condemn," he stressed, "the actions of the state of Israel, which has from the outset threatened its neighbours and pursued a hostile policy towards them."

What was the reason for such a change in Soviet policy towards Israel and the Arab countries? The point is, in my opinion, that Tel Aviv set its sights on establishing closer ties with Washington precisely at the time when the cold war began. The Soviet leaders' reasoning in those years was rather simple: friends and enemies were determined by the global confrontation with the United States. Those who sided with Washington were considered Moscow's enemies, and vice versa.

So, when Moscow was on friendly terms with Tel Aviv, the Soviet media reported on any Arab action as aggression which Israel was compelled to repulse.

Shamir comes under attack

(Continued from page 1)

for preliminary negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. Shamir maintained Monday had not agreed to accept Baker's proposal or had he made any deviations from the election initiative approved by the government last May.

"At this moment, I am not planning anything new. I think we are still at the beginning and we have to go in the same path

that we have set for ourselves," Shamir said on Israel television. Israel's plan calls for elections in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip to choose Palestinians to open talks with Israel on an interim peace settlement.

Geula Cohen, a legislator from the right-wing Tehiya Party, said the Shamir agreement with Yosef could put her party's support for a Likud-led government in jeopardy.

As Moscow's relations with Washington deteriorated, Arab countries became friends of the Soviet Union, and the tone of Soviet reports on events in the Middle East changed accordingly. The Soviet media kept silent when Arab countries undertook military operations against Israel, whereas Tel Aviv's retaliatory attack was pictured as "another act of aggression on the part of Israel." Such reporting accounts, to a considerable extent, for the appearance of books about the savage essence of Zionism, which

ists on both sides.

Taking an unbiased view

The fact is that aggression remains aggression, regardless of the perpetrator. For instance, Moscow had every reason to condemn the Anglo-Franco-Israeli invasion of Egypt in 1956, which claimed numerous civilian lives. In 1967, Israel attacked several Arab countries. In 1982, Lebanon was subjected to a massive attack undertaken by Israeli troops. Israeli troops are now occupying Arab territories, killing rebels in

The Arabs have good cause to dislike Israel, as Israel has cause to dislike the Arabs. Each side has its weighty arguments. The Soviet Union has invariably adhered to the principle of listening to only one side of the conflict; first Israel and then the Arab. One need not be a prophet to say with confidence that a similar position will never lead to a just solution of the Palestinian problem.

incessantly attacks its peaceful Arab neighbours.

However, these books have never mentioned that the majority of Arab countries established as their main foreign policy goal the complete annihilation of the state of Israel. Until now, Arab countries have printed maps of the world with Israel not indicated on them. It is no surprise, therefore, that mutual hostility between Zionist Israel and Arab countries has not subsided, but continues, supported by extrem-

their own land. In the present international situation the immorality of any occupation of foreign territory is becoming increasingly evident.

The point is not only that the Soviet Union has condemned these acts of aggression. Arab states and their citizens, including children, became victims, and their anger and hatred can therefore be justified. Moreover, one can also understand the Arab's feeling of hostility towards Israel. According to many data, 24,000

Jews lived in Palestine at the time of the emergence of Zionism at the end of last century. As many as 56,700 Jews lived in Palestine in 1914 and 46,000 in 1937. During the World War II, the Jewish population began to grow more rapidly. It could be easily inferred from this trend by what year the Arabs would become a national minority in that land.

One can hardly find a nation that would keep quiet in the face of similar prospects. It is natural that the Palestinian Arabs revolted against Jewish expansionism in 1920, 1929, 1933 and 1936-39.

The Arab population did not disappear, however. Israel was established as a state, though artificially. In keeping with the U.N. resolution of 1947, Palestine was divided into two — Arab and Jewish — states with clearly defined borders. And this could have settled the long dispute. Two hostile Semitic nations were divided by a frontier. Each of them received the opportunity to develop independently and live as good neighbours. But events took a different turn.

The 42-year experience of war and clashes has shown that it is impossible to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. The Palestine Liberation Organisation represented by Yasser Arafat has itself drawn such a conclusion. It should be remembered that the PLO is one of the parties in the conflict which has suffered most of all from the endless hostility and is now waging a struggle in the occupied territories. However, we should not disregard the forces standing apart from this struggle. Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi declared on Jan. 7 of this year that Israel, like the Berlin Wall, is a product of the

World War II and that, like the Berlin Wall, it must be destroyed. Qadhafi did not explain how he was going to wipe Israel out: physically, by way of genocide, or only by abolishing it as a state. I think it is a futile idea, fraught with the danger of a Third World War. Today it is simply impossible to eradicate a state, whether good or bad. However, Qadhafi is not the only one in the Arab World who advocates such an idea.

The Arabs have good cause to dislike Israel, as Israel has cause to dislike the Arabs. Each side has its weighty arguments. The Soviet Union has invariably adhered to the principle of listening to only one side in the conflict: first Israel and then the Arabs. One need not be a prophet to say with confidence that a similar position will never lead to a just solution of the Palestinian problem. Nevertheless, it must be settled without delay because people are being killed daily in the course of the intifada in the occupied territories. The bloodshed can be stopped if Israeli leaders begin talks with Yasser Arafat, the most popular leader among the Palestinian Arabs.

One can endlessly damn Israel for its aggressive policy and call for destroying it. However, this will not lead to peace in the region. If both sides in the conflict are sincerely concerned about peace, they should admit not only the opponent's mistakes, but also their own mistakes.

To get to the root of the matter, one should conduct a close examination of it. The magnitude of the Middle East problem can be assessed only if the opinions of both sides are taken into account. But this is the subject of another article.

Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



OUT OF FOCUS

Season of sour grapes

Adnan Saed Aqil

THE OTHER DAY, I met an old friend of mine hanging around with a dejected look in the lobby of one of Amman's hotels. The man, an also-ran in the Nov. 8 elections, seemed to have aged years in a matter of months, and I was naturally concerned. What was the matter? I inquired. "Well, I'm tired of running around," he said. But that does not account for his health situation, I pointed out.

He sat back, stared at the wall for a moment, and heaved a sigh. "I don't seem to get anywhere," he said. "You know, I did not do well in the elections." To me, it was the understatement of the year, but still I nodded in sympathy.

"And then came the union elections," he continued. "Again the same story. I spent a lot of money on manifests and drinks, but somehow could not get a seat in the committee. Talk of ungratefulness, and some of them could set world records."

Knowing him, I hastened to pitch in: "Sure, the elections were rigged, weren't they?"

"Do I have to spell it out?" he looked at me accusingly. "Of course, they were rigged. Otherwise, how can you account for my defeat?"

I had an easy and simple answer to that, but preferred to keep it to myself. All I could say was you win some, you lose some. "I fail to understand something," he said. "People don't seem to realize what is good for them." Well, it was because people knew what was good for them that he had that dejected look on his face, I wanted to say but thought better.

In any event, with his "political" career in shambles, what was his next move? I was curious.

"I was betting on being named to the Royal Commission on the national charter," he said. "I was not even called in. I am surprised at the kind of people they have in the panel. Put a couple of dozen of them together and still they will fall short of my full talent."

"You know, many people are complaining about it," he said. About what, him being not in the panel? I asked. "That's besides the point," he replied, getting ready for a long debate. But he suddenly remembered something, got up and said: "I have to rush. See you later," and made a quick exit.

I was tapped on the shoulder, and it was another friend. "Where did your friend go?" he asked. Before I could take another breath, I heard myself saying: "Looking for sour grapes at the Wihdat market, I am sure."

Sri Lankan report links unrest to poverty

By Donatus de Silva

A REPORT recently published by a government commission into the causes of unrest in Sri Lanka found that the roots of dissent lay in a sense of alienation and frustration felt by poor urban and rural youth.

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka — A government commission probing the causes of youth unrest and violence in Sri Lanka has highlighted the gap between rich and poor as a major concern of militant groups in the country.

The commission's findings have a relevance beyond Sri Lanka's borders since so many developing countries have similar or worse social problems and economic conditions: high percentage of young people; remote and unresponsive bureaucracies; corruption and nepotism; and governments blind to the problems of the powerless rural poor.

The report comes in the wake of a dying insurrection in central and southern Sri Lanka by the Janura Vimukthi Peramuna (the People's Liberation Front, JVP), in which thousands perished.

The seven-member commission, appointed by the Sri Lankan government last year, was made up of representatives of both the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamil communities. It consisted of two university vice-chancellors, a school principal, a bank manager, a community development worker, the head of an ethics studies institute, and a journalist.

The commission found that most disgruntled youth involved in the insurrection were of rural origin, coming from villages where more than 75 per cent of the country's population lives. Nearly 45 per cent of Sri Lanka's population of 16.5 million are under the age of 24.

The report states frankly that the problem is not so much the youth themselves, but derives from a political, economic and education system that exploits the rural and urban poor.

Many young people complained to the commissioners that there was no mechanism through which they could air their grievances and obtain redress. Their resort to armed uprising was sparked by conviction that they were unable to make any impact on government policy.

Rural youth, in particular, resented the English-educated elitist old-boy network, which exercises power and enjoys prestige in the country, says the report. This network, buttressed by connections within high families, determines employment, social advancement, or even the selection of candidates at elections.

Young people were cynical about the political parties which are dominated by a handful of rich and powerful families, and had no faith or interest in joining them.

The commissioners point out that the JVP was able to cash in on the feeling of alienation and marginalisation among rural youth. The insurrection was seen

by the JVP as a struggle against the government's development priorities, which poured resources into the towns and ignored the villages. One of their effective posters bore the caption: Milk for Colombo, cucumbers for us.

Youths decried the intolerable levels of divisiveness in Sri Lanka, an society because of rivalries between the traditional political parties.

The report says that the young acutely resented the perversions of the democratic system which enabled two regimes to postpone elections: by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (now in opposition) in 1972 and again in 1982, when the United National Party (presently in power) substituted a referendum for a general election. These manoeuvres were regarded by youth as "flagrant abuses of accepted democratic values", the report states.

The report cites unemployment as a major cause of friction. Every year, some 180,000 students sit the advanced level examinations. Only 35,000 qualify to enter universities. Of these, around 18,000 seek entrance, but only 6,000 succeed in entering the universities. Of the rest, a few thousand secure admission into other institutes of tertiary education. The commission notes that nearly half-a-million young people enter the job market every year.

The young were very concerned about the rampant bribery and corruption prevalent in the country. They felt that measures should be taken immediately to "cleanse public life" and that the government should impose deterrent punishment on those guilty of dishonest and dishonourable behaviour.

The report criticises the lack of complete freedom of expression in the country. "Without free and independent media, democracy will not be able to flourish in Sri Lanka," it states.

The Sri Lankan government has accepted most of the recommendations of this candid report.

Among these are: new ways to secure better representation for the younger generation between the ages of 18 and 30 in the newly-created provincial councils and in village and district committees; the teaching of Sinhala, Tamil and English to all children; increased funding for rural development; and the creation of an independent media commission to monitor freedom of expression.

Responding rapidly to the recommendations, and setting an example, the government has already created an independent surrender committee to enable militants to give themselves up without fear — PANOS.

By Robert J. Sammelson

JOHNNY wears disposable diapers, and that's not an environmental disaster. By Johnny, I mean John Samuelson, who joined his sister Ruth (5) and brother Michael (3) eight weeks ago. I also mean most of the other 9 million American babies under 30 months who wear disposable diapers. I do not feel guilty that my wife and I use them, and the idea that we are destroying the planet for our children is mostly nonsense.

Disposable diapers are an instructive metaphor for the exaggerations of modern environmentalism. We all should want to be good environmentalists, but just what that means in practice isn't always easy to say. The tendency these days is to call many different problems "environmental," as if the label — all by itself — implies an impending catastrophe whose solution is a moral imperative. "Environmentalism" thus becomes a loose collection of diverse concerns, with few distinctions made about whether some problems are more serious than others.

To call disposable diapers an environmental problem is to slide into this ambiguous and random alarmism. Disposable diapers are about garbage; that's ordinary garbage, not hazardous waste. Getting rid of our garbage is a problem and, in some places, a serious one. Mainly, it involves handling the trash at an acceptable cost. But this is not a crisis that threatens the earth's future, and even if it were, disposable diapers wouldn't matter much. The 15.8 billion used annually constitute less than 2 per cent of all garbage.

These complexities are being lost in rising rhetoric. Disposable diapers have come to symbolize growing wastefulness, because most people still remember the era of reusable, cloth diapers. Although Procter & Gamble first marketed Pampers in 1961, the product didn't go national until 1970. (P & G says that disposables now account for 90 per cent of diapers, up from 65 per cent in 1980 and 25 per cent in 1970.) Vermont Gov. Madeleine Kunin has proposed banning disposables, though her legislature probably won't go along. And Forbes maga-

zine recently lambasted them on its cover: "Can We Have A Cleaner Environment and Pampers Too?"

In fact, the symbolism is misleading. Our garbage problem is not primarily the result of our becoming an increasingly throwaway society. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that the average American generates (after recycling) 3.3 pounds of garbage a day, only slightly higher than in 1970. The truth is that almost everything you probably believe about garbage is wrong, as archaeologist William Rathje, head of The Garbage Project at the University of Arizona, argues in December's *The Atlantic*.

You think plastic are the problem? Guess again. They account for about 8 per cent of the garbage. Metals? They're about 9 per cent. By contrast, paper represents 37 per cent and yard waste 20 per cent of garbage. Nor is today's problem especially bad historically. "Our society is filled with... reminders of waste," Rathje writes. "What we forget is everything that is no longer there to see... the 1,200 pounds per year of coal ash that every

American generated at home at the turn of the century... (and) the hundreds of thousands of dead horses that once had to be disposed of by American cities every year."

The problem today stems from shifting societal standards. Landfills now absorb more than three quarters of all garbage, and in a country as vast as ours, there's plenty of room for new ones. The trouble is that fewer communities want them, and tighter regulations are raising their costs. Between 1985 and 1988, average tipping fees — the cost of dumping a ton of garbage in a landfill — jumped from \$12 to \$27, reports the National Solid Waste Management Association. Our task is to make landfills acceptable or find alternatives, from garbage prevention to recycling to incineration.

I have no quarrel with parents who prefer cloth diapers, as a rising minority apparently do. The National Association of Diaper Services reports its members' business is up about 40 per cent in the past year. "I've never seen such a dramatic turnaround," says Jack Mogavero, president of Gener-

al Health Care Corporation, the largest diaper service. (Environmentalism isn't the only reason. New diaper covers with Velcro closures make cloth diapers easier to use.) But parents are deluding themselves if they think using cloth diapers is somehow saving the environment.

Messy choices

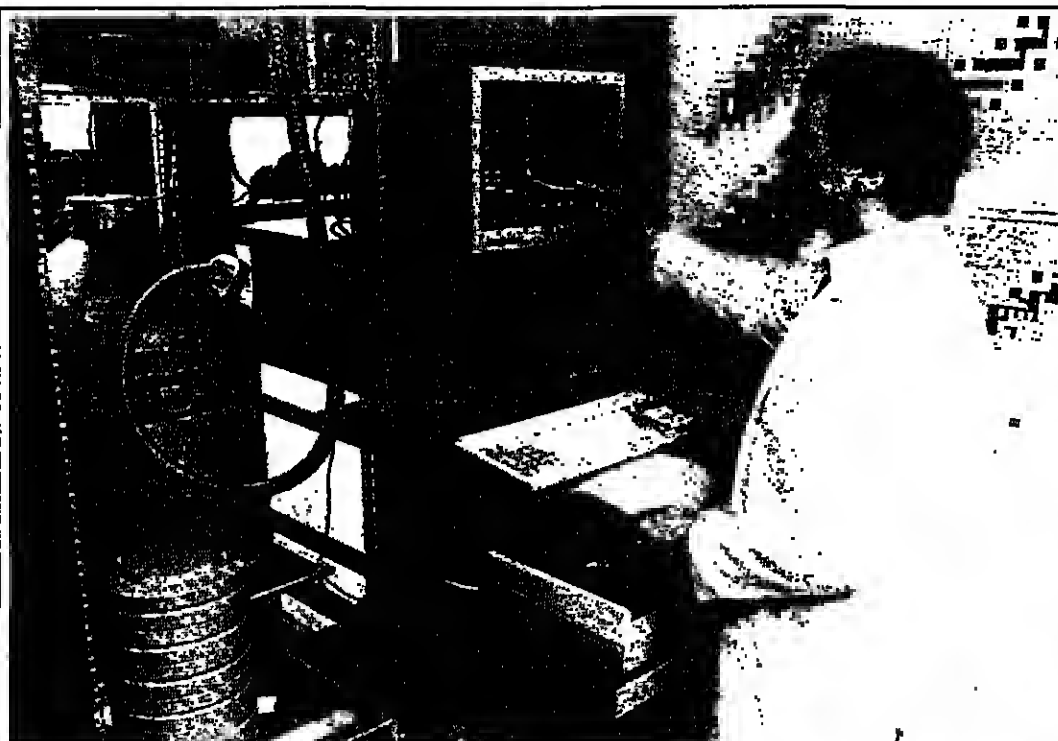
Suppose everyone switched to cloth diapers tomorrow. All those diapers (45 million a day, at current rates) have to be washed in hot water, which requires energy and generates pollution. For families using diaper services, the diapers have to be picked up and delivered by trucks that burn fuel, create fumes and worsen traffic congestion. By contrast, most disposables are purchased in shopping trips that he would be made anyway.

The point is not to show that one diaper is environmentally superior to the other. It is simply to emphasize that comparisons are iffy. Each diaper does some damage, but how are we to judge relative dangers? Are air pollution and the threat to global warming more serious problems than garbage

disposal? Environmental debates tend to slide by these messy choices.

My own hunch is that garbage is a lesser ill. To some extent, the problem — higher costs — is also the solution. As disposal costs rise, recycling becomes more attractive and economically viable. Carefully crafted, recycling laws aid the process by lowering collection costs. In 1988, about 31 per cent of all paper was collected and reused. By 1995, the paper industry estimates, that could rise to 40 per cent. There will be more efforts to cope with yard waste through mass composting rather than using landfills.

Personally, I'm doing my part within the bounds of common sense. Just last week I brought a coffee mug into the office. This will cut my use of polystyrene cups by somewhere between 300 to 600 a year. I want the best possible world for my new son, who has a beguiling smile and a calming stare. Relax, Dad, he says. Being a worrier, I can't. I already have lots of concerns for his future. But the way we diaper is not among them. — Newsweek magazine.



Using new highly sensitive instruments produced in Germany, the German Meteorological Service in Offenbach can now easily detect radioactive decay

equivalent to 1,000 millibecquerels as soon as it occurs. — (Photo: INP/DPA).

New device to measure radiation

OFFENBACH - (INP) — With the use of highly sensitive instruments radiochemists working for the German Meteorological Service in Offenbach near Frankfurt am Main can now easily detect instances of radioactive decay equivalent to 1,000 millibecquerels as soon as they occur. This means that it is possible to measure nuclear decay taking place every ten seconds in one cubic metre of air containing 27×10^{14} molecules.

Since the accident at the Soviet nuclear power plant in Chernobyl on April 26, 1986, an interest has developed in

technologies of this kind among politicians and in the general public. Since that accident occurred, careful measurements have been carried out to the extent permitted by the current state of the art in electronics and chemistry. This is not exactly new territory for the Offenbach radiochemists and meteorologists. The data they gathered on radioactive contamination of the atmosphere due to atom bomb testing after World War II was just as bad as the data gathered on contamination caused by the Chernobyl disaster.

When the Chernobyl cloud reached the Federal Republic, the highly sensitive measuring instruments were pushed to the limit of their capacities. "Our task," says one of the scientists, "is to detect all types of radioactivity as early as possible, determine its source, and predict in which directions it is likely to spread, all of which is used to prepare warnings for the public." By 1992 Germany is expected to have 26 stations equipped with devices of this type. Other countries are beginning to show an interest in the instruments.

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Banke grabs super bantamweight title

LOS ANGELES (R) — Paul Banke of the United States won the World Boxing Council (WBC) super bantamweight title from Mexico's Daniel Zaragoza Monday in a bruising rematch when the referee stopped the fight in the ninth round of a scheduled 12-round bout.

Trailing on all the judges' scorecards, Banke knocked Zaragoza to the canvas midway through the ninth round with a flurry of punches to the head.

The 30-year-old Mexican got to his feet quickly, but Banke floored him a minute later with a left to the chin.

Referee John Thomas stopped the fight after the second knockdown at two minutes 51 seconds of the round.

The fight was fast-paced and brutal from the opening bell. The constant punching took its toll on both fighters, who were battered and bleeding after trading shots to the head for most of the bout.

"I didn't care if I go hurt," said Banke, the WBC's third-ranked contender entering the fight. "I just wanted to take it to him."

Zaragoza, in his sixth title defence, acknowledged that he disregarded his corner's instruction to take a more tactical approach.

"I didn't want to box him. I wanted to slug with him," Zaragoza said, daubing his swollen eyes with a bag of ice. Zaragoza seemed to take control of the fight in the middle rounds, utilising his three-inch (7.6 cm) reach advantage.

"In the fifth and sixth rounds I got a little tired," Banke said, but the 26-year-old American never let up.

The last time the two 122-pound (55.33 kilogramme) fighters met, in June 1989, Zaragoza came back from a ninth-round knockdown to win a split points decision over Banke.

Despite the battering both fighters took in the two matches, they said they were eager to fight again.

The win raised Banke's record to 19 wins against four losses. Zaragoza fell to 39 wins, five losses and one draw.

Missing stars force changes in England team

LONDON (R) — England manager Bobby Robson, deprived of his usual attacking line-up, has revamped his team for Wednesday's soccer friendly against fellow World Cup finalists Czechoslovakia.

For the first time in nearly two years, Robson was unable to call on either of his first-choice wingers — John Barnes of Liverpool and Chris Waddle of Marseille — because of injury and club commitments.

Striker Peter Beardsley is still recovering from a knee injury and has been ruled out of the match although he will join the squad at Wembley.

Tried and trusted midfielder Trevor Steven and Steve Hodge, veterans of the 1986 World Cup in Mexico with experience on the wings, are recalled. Hodge has not started a match for England since September 1988.

Steve Bull, high-scoring centre-forward for second division Wolverhampton Wanderers, comes in as understudy for Beardsley alongside Tottenham's Gary Lineker.

Like Lineker, the first division's top goalscorer, Bull is a natural marksman and has made three international appearances, one as substitute for Beardsley against Denmark last June.

England captain Bryan Robson returns for his first international since a groin injury last December, playing in midfield alongside the gifted but frequently short-tempered Paul Gascoigne.

Arsenal's Lee Dixon makes his debut at right back but reserve goalkeeper Chris Woods looks unlikely to play any part in the match after he accidentally cut the top of a finger with a penknife Tuesday and needed four stitches in the wound.

Czechoslovakia give a controversial international recall to Ivo Krmficek and Lubos Kubik, who defected in 1988 and signed contracts to play for English first division Derby County, only to be denied by the International Football Federation (FIFA) as the moves did not conform with normal transfer procedure.

Jahangir wins British Open for ninth year

LONDON (R) — Jahangir Khan won the British Open squash championship for a record-breaking ninth year in succession by beating Rodney Martin, the world number five from Australia, 9-6, 10-8, 9-1 Monday.

"This is the greatest day of my life," Jahangir said after completing the victory that eclipsed the run of eight titles won by Australia's Geoff Hunt.

The 79-minute defeat of Martin was Pakistani Jahangir's 51st victory in a row at the British Open since setting out on the road to his first title in 1982.

Jahangir rated his latest success as one of his best. "I was very pleased with my performance and I played better than in many of the previous years," he said.

"Lots of people were saying I was not good enough or fit enough to win again this time, but I proved once more that when I want to do it, I can do it."

Jahangir looked to be heading for a relatively easy win when he served for the second game at 8-5 but Martin saved five game balls before the top seed clinched an all-important 2-0 lead.

By then the match was 70 minutes old and the Australian had little left to contest the third game in which he served just twice.

Jahangir scotched rumours that he would now retire. "I believe I can still play on for another three or four years as long as I stay clear of injury problems," he said.

"I will cut down on the number of tournaments but I will certainly be back to try and win the British Open for at least a 10th time. To me this is the most important event in the world."

Earlier, Susan Devoy of New Zealand won the women's title for the seventh year in succession when she beat England's Suzanne Horner, the number 12 seed, 9-2, 1-9, 9-3, 9-3 in just under an hour.

Horner had beaten Martin Le Moignan, the reigning world champion, Robyn Lambourne, the fifth seed from Australia, and Lucy Souter, the British national champion, on her way to the final.

She reproduced the sort of form which brought her those scalps in the second game of the final, winning it in just nine minutes, but Devoy's immense experience and the best backhand drop shot in the women's game carried the day.

Sweden hopes for sharper strikers

STOCKHOLM (R) — Sweden manager Otto Nordin hopes young newcomer Tomas Brodin will provide the striking prowess sorely missing from his team this year when they meet Wales in a World Cup soccer warm-up Wednesday.

Brodin, 20, struck five times for IFK Norrköping in the opening two matches of the Swedish premier league this month.

"He is a modern forward who also assumes defensive responsibilities," Nordin said.

The Sweden manager has only the Wales clash and an encounter with Finland on May 27, both in Stockholm, before the World Cup opener against Brazil on June 10 to sharpen his attack which has failed to score in four games this season.

Defender Stefan Schwarz has scored twice and midfielders Stefan Rehn and Klas Ingesson once each in the 2-1 defeat and 2-0 victory against the United Arab Emirates, and 0-0 and 1-1 draws with Belgium and Algeria respectively.

Sweden's three best-known top guns on the Wales squad have been silent so far.

Mats Magnusson drove home a 30-metre free kick against Feirense Sunday for his 30th goal for Beofica this season, but the Swede rarely scores when wearing the national side's yellow and blue jersey.

Johnny Ekstrom completed a dazzling run to score Sweden's decisive second goal in the 2-0 World Cup qualifier against Poland which secured Sweden's ticket to Italy last autumn.

Steeb slides out of Monte Carlo Open

MONTE CARLO (R) — West German Davis Cup player Carl-Uwe Steeb, the 10th seed, was the only unexpected casualty of a gentle opening day at the \$1 million Monte Carlo Open Monday.

With only three seeds in action, it was more a case of talking about Stephanie while waiting for Stefan for tennis fans at the Monte Carlo country club.

Top seed Stefan Edberg received a first round bye and, in his absence, the attention in the principality was naturally on the weekend announcement of the engagement of Princess Stephanie.

There was little to divert them on centre court, apart from Jonas Svensson's 7-6, 6-3 win over Steeb.

The West German had his chances but threw them away against the persistent Swede. He led 3-1 in the first set and had break points at 2-2 in the second

but failed to capitalise on his advantage.

"Charly's a very tough competitor so I tried to work him hard and make him a little bit confused," Svensson said. "And it worked."

Svensson, ranked 25th in the world, only nine places lower than his opponent, recently took up residence in Monaco and said he benefited a lot from playing a home match.

"It makes a lot of difference to be able to stay in your own apartment and cook your own food instead of staying in a hotel," he said.

Steeb was not the only seed to fall. Number 15 Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden was beaten by Ronald Agenor of Haiti but it was another result which could not be classified as a major upset.

Agenor, ranked 45th in the world, is always at his most dangerous on clay and he had

everything his own way in a 6-2, 6-2 victory.

The only seed who did get through was number 12 Andrei Chesnokov of the Soviet Union who managed a straight sets win over Yugoslav Goran Pripic.

The Monte Carlo tournament is the most prestigious of the early European clay court season but it has been hit by the withdrawal of several top names.

That was best illustrated by the tournament's official wine — a bottle of Mouton Cadet red with a special Monte Carlo label featuring pictures of the six top players.

Three of them — Americans John McEnroe and Andre Agassi along with Swede Mats Wilander — pulled out before the start of the event.

The other three, Edberg, Boris Becker and Yannick Noah of France, remain the only ones capable of drawing the crowds in large numbers.

Gullit to miss Italian Cup final

By Reuters

RUUD Gullit, who took the field for the first time in nearly a year last Sunday, will not play for A.C. Milan in the second leg of the Italian Cup soccer final against Juventus Wednesday.

The two sides drew 0-0 in Turin on Feb. 28.

The brilliant Dutchman, who has been sidelined with a knee injury for 11 months, played for 30 minutes as Milan went down

2-1 to Verona.

But he is under strict orders from his doctor to rest.

Otherwise both sides are at full strength with Gullit's compatriot Marco Van Basten and Frank Rijkaard, who were both sent off against Verona, set to play.

Milan, who meet Portugal's Benfica in the European Cup final in Vienna on May 23, had a nightmare match against Verona when three players in all plus trainer Arrigo Sacchi were sent

off.

The defeat all but killed their chances of the league title and Juventus coach Dino Zoff fears a possible backlash Wednesday.

"I believe the team that is freshest athletically and coldest mentally will prevail," Zoff said.

Real Madrid midfielder Rafael Martin Vazquez, the hottest property in Spanish soccer this year, is another foreigner who could join the lucrative Italian league.

Basketball roundup

By Associated Press

Philadelphia-Cleveland

THEIR records were good enough to win the Atlantic Division. Unfortunately, the Utah Jazz and the Phoenix Suns aren't in the Atlantic Division.

As a result, one of the Western Conference powers is going to make an early exit from National Basketball Association (NBA) playoffs, which start this week.

The Jazz (55-27) meet the Suns (54-28) in the opening round, beginning Friday night at the Salt Palace. It's the first time since the 1974 Detroit-Chicago series that two teams with more than 50 victories have met in the opening round.

Although Phoenix was 3-1 against Utah this season, the Jazz will have the homecourt advantage in the best-of-5 series because they had a better overall record.

"Utah is a little bit like us," Suns forward Tom Chambers said. "They lost some important games down the stretch and so did we. We're kind of in the same boat right now."

The playoffs open Thursday with Indiana at Detroit, New York at Boston, Cleveland at Philadelphia, Denver at San Antonio and Dallas at Portland.

On Friday, it's Phoenix at Utah, Milwaukee at Chicago and Houston at the Los Angeles Lakers.

Eastern Conference

The defending champion Pistons won the Central Division and had the league's second-best record, but they lost eight of their last 16 games.

"We are just happy to get the season over with and get to the playoffs," forward James Edwards said.

Indiana finished only two games above .500, barely made the playoffs and lost four of five games against Detroit. But Pacers coach Dick Versace remains confident.

"This is the greatest Pacer team ever," he said. "It is the greatest passing team, the best shooting team from 3-point range. This is the most enjoyable year I've ever had in coaching."

Boston-New York

The Celtics surged at the end of the season, winning nine of their last 10 games.

"I feel we can beat anyone in the Eastern conference," Kevin McHale said. "We match up nicely with the Knicks and we know what we have to do."

The Knicks, who were 1-4 against Boston this season, enter the playoffs in a slump. They lost their last three games and 21 of their last 33.

"It's been kind of rough for us, but the playoffs is a totally new season," Knicks' centre Patrick Ewing said. "We just have to go in there and play the way we're capable of playing, not the way we've been playing."

Western conference

The Lakers had the league's best record (63-19), while the Rockets squeezed into the playoffs on the final day of the season.

"The only thing I can say about this Rockets team is God must be smiling on us," coach Don Chaney said after Houston beat Utah 100-88 Sunday to earn the final playoff berth in the Western Conference.

"We keep screwing it up, but this time we got the job done. Our guys really reacted well under pressure. You wouldn't believe how relieved I am."

The Lakers, who split four games with Houston this season, haven't lost an opening-round series since 1981 — when the Rockets beat them.

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♠ A 9 8 4
♥ A K 8
♦ Void
♣ A K 9 4 3 2

WEST

♠ Q 10 7
♥ J 10 6 4
♦ J 4 3 2
♣ J 6

EAST

♠ 5 2
♥ 7 5
♦ K 10 9 8 7 6 5
♣ Q 5

SOUTH

♠ K J 6 3
♥ Q 9 3 2
♦ A Q
♣ 10 8 7

The bidding:

	East	South	West	North
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	4 NT	
Pass	5 ♠	Pass	6 ♠	
Pass	6 ♠	Pass	7 ♠	
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	

Opening lead: Jack of ♣

If you think this hand looks familiar, you're right. It appeared in yesterday's column, but the positions have been switched 180 degrees. It's the same deal from the Fall North American Championships, where six spades was defeated by the extraordinary lead of the five of clubs.

At one table, seven clubs was reached on the bidding shown. North had second thoughts about the quality of the suit in which he

had made a jump shift, and "corrected" the contract to seven clubs. South did not like the contract, and rightly so. It might seem that, even though the trumps lie favorably, declarer has to concede a spade trick. Unfortunately for the defense, West found the opening lead of the jack of hearts, and declarer was quick to capitalize on this blessing from Dame Fortune.

The first trick was won on the table and declarer breathed a sigh of relief when the ace and king of clubs drew all the defenders' trumps. Now the opening lead offered declarer an extra chance for his contract.

Best technique is to cash the ace and king of spades, in an attempt to drop the queen. Since the opening lead virtually marks West for the ten of hearts, if the queen of spades does not come down, declarer next finesesses the eight of hearts! When that holds, declarer cashes the table's remaining heart, comes to hand with the ten of trumps and discards two spades on the ace of diamonds and queen of hearts. Curious hand. The small slam goes down, but the grand slam makes!

For information about Charles Goren's newsletter for bridge players, write Goren Bridge Letter, P.O. Box 4426, Orlando, Fla. 32802-4426.

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Sandinista, contras accuse each other of breaking ceasefire

MANAGUA (R) — Nicaragua's Sandinista army and U.S.-backed contra rebels Monday accused each other of breaking the ceasefire aimed at ending the country's eight-year-old civil war.

"The counterrevolutionary forces continue violating the end of military attacks (called for in a ceasefire) signed on April 19," the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

It accused the contras of stopping vehicles, kidnapping three peasants and stealing money in four separate incidents in the north of the country on Friday and Monday.

Rebel Commander Oscar Sosaalbarro meanwhile accused Sandinista forces of wounding a contra rebel in an attack on a group of contras Sunday, also in the north.

Speaking in the first camp set up by United Nations peacekeeping forces to receive disarmed contras, Sosaalbarro said Sandinistas had attacked the rebels in

an area known as La Canada. "They were ready to leave when the Sandinistas arrived and attacked them with troops and heavy artillery," he said.

The head of United Nations peace-keeping and observer forces in Central America, Spain's General Agustin Quesada, confirmed there had been a clash but gave no details.

Asked if the incident could impede the disarmament process, Sosaalbarro, known as Comandante Ruben, said: "If they carry out another attack it will endanger the agreements the Nicaraguan Resistance has the good will to comply with."

Under a separate demobilisation accord signed Thursday Sosaalbarro and an aide to Nicaraguan President-elect Violeta Cha-

morro, the contras agreed to start disbanding in five security enclaves inside Nicaragua on April 25, the day Chamorro takes power from Sandinista President Daniel Ortega.

U.N. peacekeeping troops from Venezuela, who are to collect rebel arms and supervise the separation of contra and Sandinista forces, started setting up the first such enclave.

At a contra camp about 15 kilometres away, contra military Chief of Staff Israel Galeano said he accepted the accord to disband but said the rebels expected further negotiations with Chamorro's new government.

"The world is made of transactions and in this case we are real and armed. To stop being so would also be in exchange for something," Galeano told Reuters.

Galeano did not say what the rebels were demanding from the new government but other senior rebel leaders here said they ex-

pected certain political, economic and security guarantees.

They said at the head of the list was a demand that Defence Minister Humberto Ortega and other senior Sandinista officials be removed from the Nicaraguan army.

But the Sandinista Party said Monday all members of the Sandinista-controlled army who hold top political positions in the government have been removed from their party posts as agreed, a move that appeared aimed at allowing Ortega to retain his position as head of the army.

The Sandinistas have gutted the state-run radio network rather than turn the stations over to the conservative government that takes power Wednesday, according to officials of the incoming administration. They have also broken up a government-owned network of 16 advertising and publicity firms.

Curfew on Kathmandu lifted

KATHMANDU (R) — Kathmandu nervously licked its wounds Tuesday with nobody really sure who held power — Nepal's new reformist government or its absolute monarch.

New Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai announced regular back-to-back curfews after at least six people died Monday in a day of crowd attacks on police and police firing on demonstrators.

There was a great deal of nervousness evident Tuesday with more posters going up alleging a monarchist plot existed to undermine Bhattarai's interim administration.

King Birendra, still legally the absolute ruler of this poor Himalayan kingdom, gave way in the face of massive pro-democracy protests last week and installed Bhattarai with a mandate to introduce parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy.

A special commission is due to recommend changes to the constitution but for the moment the old one still exists. It says all powers emanate from the throne.

Violence began soon after dawn Monday when people, incensed at deaths during the democracy campaign and excited by rumours of monarchist conspiracies, began attacking police.

Thousands surged through the city. Interior Minister Yog Prasad Upadhyay was detained at one point and forced to promise that alleged pro-monarchist "conspirators" in the police would be punished.

Other people marched on the royal palace chanting "Birendra, quit the country, you've lost control" to the man traditionally revered as a descendant of the Hindu god Vishnu.

Security forces, uncertain whether they answer to the palace or to cabinet ministers they held in detention or under house arrest just two weeks ago, returned to base when the curfew ended at dawn Tuesday.

But soon afterwards about 30 riot police arrived to guard the burnt-out headquarters of the city's main law and order office, scattering youths who had been scavenging through the debris.

One fleeing youth dropped what looked like ammunition. Witnesses said others had managed to carry away two or three rifles from the least damaged section of the building, the Firearms Department where local people had to deposit guns for registration.

The streets around the headquarters, sealed off Monday while police drove back demonstrators, were pink with the dust of broken bricks and littered with sandals discarded in flight.

Crowds scrutinised charred official documents blown from the building.

Others packed into nearby Bir Hospital and scuffled in the lobby for a glimpse of six corpses strewn behind a canvas screen.

One was a frail child doctors said was a girl of about 10, caught in police gunfire Monday.

Two were policemen, "beaten to death by crowds."

In the bazaar behind the hospital, men and women crowded around vegetable vendors and peasants squatting beside cages of squawking chickens, stocking up on rumours.

Others huddled whispering in groups or stared silently at wall posters warning of monarchist plots.

Many said they did not know whether to drink tap water. City-wide rumours said the supply had been poisoned.

Centre-right party claims victory in Croatian polls

ZAGREB, Yugoslavia (AP) — A centre-right party seeking the end of Yugoslavia's federal system said it was confident of victory Tuesday, following the first free election in Croatia in more than 50 years.

Preliminary results, based on two-thirds of the 2.8 million votes cast, showed the Croatian Democratic Union leading in 62 districts for the 196 seats of the bicameral state legislature.

The ruling Communists — now renamed the Party for Democratic Change — held a lead in 32 districts, and the centrist five-party Coalition of National Accord was ahead in 14 constituencies.

But the CDU's seemingly unassailable initial lead was tempered by voting patterns in eleven of the 62 constituencies.

In these eleven districts a combination of the Communists and their left-wing allies, who are certain to field joint candidates in run-offs two weeks from now,

was actually leading in the total number of votes.

No results were available for the remaining legislative seats, nor for the national parliament's 180-seat labour chamber for which all employed citizens voted Monday.

"We expect to win about 60 per cent of the vote — an overwhelming majority," Zarko Domijan, the CDU chief in the Croatian capital of Zagreb, told the Associated Press from the party headquarters.

The building, decked in Croatian flags with the traditional red-and-white checkered shield instead of the official Communist red star, was joining campaign workers and supporters to celebrate "a historic victory."

The CDU has been accused by the Communist-dominated media in Yugoslavia's largest republic of Serbia of being an "extreme nationalist" organisation seeking full independence for Croatia and the break-up of the fragile Yugoslav Federation.

Kosovo Communist Party leader, 13 others freed

TITOVA MITROVICA, Yugoslavia (AP) — Azem Vllasi, former Communist Party chief of the troubled province of Kosovo, and 13 other ethnic Albanians were acquitted Tuesday at the end of Yugoslavia's largest political trial in decades.

Hundreds of ethnic Albanians, who consider Vllasi their hero, waited in front of the courtroom to hear the reading of the sentences. Heavily-armed riot police were at hand to watch the crowd.

Vllasi and the others were originally accused of counter-revolutionary activities for allegedly instigating a wave of protests by ethnic Albanians in winter 1989 that eventually led to violence in Kosovo that left numerous people dead, according to the indictment.

Last week, the charges were modified to remove the threat of execution.

The popular former Kosovo leader, whose trial has been widely criticised by Yugoslav and Western human rights groups, was released after the sentence was announced. He was arrested last March.

Judge Ismet Emura said the 14 ethnic Albanians were acquitted because of lack of evidence.

"This is a victory for justice in Yugoslavia," the 43-year-old Vllasi said after hearing the verdict. Tears were in his eyes as he embraced his wife.

Kosovo, where ethnic Albanians comprise a 90-per cent majority, has had violent protests for more than a year because of constitutional amendments that gave the republic of Serbia almost complete control over the once autonomous province.

The amendments were said to be necessary to protect Slavs in Kosovo from alleged harassment by ethnic Albanians.

At least 60 people have died in violent protests over the past year.

During the six-month trial, Vllasi retained charges that he instigated the unrest. He claimed the trial was staged by Serbia's president, Slobodan Milosevic.

Politicians and the media in Yugoslavia's western republics of Slovenia and Croatia, as well as some international human rights organisations, have strongly criticised the proceedings.

Vllasi, who headed Kosovo's Communist Party in the mid-1980s, stood accused on four counts, including that of "secretly visiting" ethnic Albanian miners who staged an eight-day sit-in at a nearby mine in February 1989 to protest the adoption of the constitutional changes.

Mexico leader warns U.S. not to abduct criminals

LOS ANGELES (R) — Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari has issued a stern warning to Washington that Mexico would not tolerate the abduction of alleged drug traffickers to the United States.

Salinas, who maintained that Mexico was successfully fighting drug trafficking, declared no arbitrary acts by "persecutors" to combat drug smuggling would be tolerated.

"The battle against drug traffickers requires international cooperation, but for that cooperation to be real and effective, it has to take place within international law," he said.

Salinas issued his warning amid controversy over the capture of a Mexican doctor, Humberto Alvarez Maehain, who was brought by plane from Guadalajara, Mexico, to El Paso, Texas, earlier this month.

Alvarez, in jail in Los Angeles facing a murder charge, is alleged by U.S. prosecutors to have administered drugs to a U.S. drug agent, Enrique Camarena Salazar, so he could continue to be questioned and tortured until he was murdered in Guadalajara in February 1985.

U.S. officials have denied that Alvarez was abducted by U.S. agents but the Mexican government has said his capture on Mexican soil may have violated Mexican sovereignty.

Breaking away from the text of a prepared speech to the American Newspaper Publishers Association, Salinas said if there were abductions, Mexico might be forced to reconsider its policy of cooperation with the United States in fighting drug traffickers.

Mexico has asked the United States for information on the incident.

Sihanouk agrees to talks with Hun Sen

BANGKOK (Agencies) — Cambodia's stop-start war spluttered back to life Tuesday with guerrillas fighting to retake a cluster of battered villages in the parched northwest.

As non-Communist forces closed in on the hunkers around Sway Chek, Thai officials said ousted guerrilla leader Prince Norodom Sihanouk had agreed to preparatory talks here next month to lay the groundwork for proposed peace talks in Tokyo.

A spokesman for the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) said Tuesday about 2,500 guerrillas had retaken outposts around Sway Chek, a KPNLF stronghold for three months until government troops recaptured it in February.

"We have taken all the outposts around Sway Chek and that's why we think it will be our moment or the next," Ok Serai Sopheak said by telephone from the border town of Aranyaprathet.

There were no immediate reports of casualties during the fighting, which began Monday.

A loose coalition of guerrilla armies, backed by China and the West and dominated by the internationally reviled Khmer Rouge, have been fighting an 11-year war to oust Hun Sen's Vietnamese-installed government.

Since Vietnam withdrew its troops last September the guerrillas have made small gains, capturing a handful of villages and towns in the west and central regions, but with little sign of a military breakthrough.

Western diplomats said Sway Chek was important to the guerrillas as a source of water and as a symbol they had won more than a thin strip of territory from government forces.

The hunkered outpost, a day's march from the Thai border, has seen some of the season's heaviest fighting. Diplomats said both sides preferred to withdraw from the area rather than sustain casualties from rival artillery fire.

In Bangkok, Thai Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan's advisers said Sihanouk agreed to the proposed talks during a dinner with the Thai premier Monday night. He had earlier turned down the invitation.

Pansak Vinyarat, chairman of Chatichai's advisers, told Reuters the meeting would precede another round of peace talks between Sihanouk and rival Hun Sen in Tokyo, possibly in June.

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Romanians protest against Iliescu

BUCHAREST (R) — About 3,000 anti-government demonstrators spilled into a central Bucharest square Tuesday as Romania's Interim President Ion Iliescu warned he would not tolerate further disturbances.

The crowd, yelling "down with Iliescu," pushed its way through cordons of helmeted police armed with batons and automatic rifles into University Square, hours after police had used clubs to break up a protest at dawn.

"We cannot allow a bunch of vagabonds to disturb public peace and order," Iliescu told a session of the Provisional Council of National Unity (provisional parliament).

The demonstrators chanted "Iliescu, we will vote for you in Moscow" reflecting fears Iliescu might try to introduce a new form of Communism to Romania.

Protesters have accused the National Salvation Front (NSF) government, which took power after December's overthrow of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, of harbouring former Communists and failing to break with the old order.

Eyewitnesses said police had beaten some 20 of 200 fleeing protesters in a baton charge earlier Tuesday.

Tuesday's demonstrators, most of them young, squatted in the centre of the square and the Magheru Boulevard or chanted "join us, join us" at police and crowds of onlookers.

A police helicopter hovered overhead and a special anti-terrorist unit stood ready in front of the nearby National Theatre.

Leon Nica, a representative of the Union of Centrist Parties, told Iliescu in parliament: "You can call them vagabonds now, but they are the people who put you in power."

He has referring to December's mass uprising that brought the NSF to power and ended in Ceausescu's execution.

The front will be running for office in Romania's first free elections in over half a century on May 20. Iliescu is a presidential candidate.

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WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Gas blast kills 33 miners in China

PEKING (R) — A gas explosion in a coal mine in China's northern Heilongjiang province killed 33 workers and injured 11, according to a report available in Peking Tuesday. The Heilongjiang Daily said the explosion rocked the Taoshan mine in Qitaihe on April 15. It was caused by an electrical fault which halted the ventilation system, allowing gas to accumulate.

Moscow to organise flights to Mecca

MOSCOW (AP) — Special flights will be organised this year for Muslims in the Soviet Union to travel to Saudi Arabia during the annual Hajj pilgrimage, a government spokesman said. The Soviet Union has no diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia, but Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze has been asked to contact the Saudi government to formalise the arrangements concerning the flights and visas, presidential spokesman Arkady Maslennikov said Monday.

Thousands mark Armenian genocide

MOSCOW (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of Armenians flocked to a hillside memorial in Yerevan Tuesday to mark the genocide that devastated their people 75 years ago, residents said. Armenians estimate that 1.5 million Armenians were killed between 1915 and 1923 by the Turkish Ottoman Empire. Turkish officials dispute Armenian accounts of the genocide, saying that only between 300,000 and 600,000 Armenians died, and most perished of disease, famine or attacks by marauders during forced deportation to Syria and Iraq from eastern Turkey. Beginning at dawn Tuesday, streams of Armenians coursed toward the memorial in the republic capital, waiting up to three hours to lay their flowers near its eternal flame, said Raffi Hovannissian, director of the Yerevan office of the Armenian Assembly of America. Black flags and red-blue and orange Armenian national flags flew from many of the city's buildings, he said in a telephone interview.

Actress Paulette Goddard dies at 84

ASCONA, Switzerland (R) — Paulette Goddard, a vivacious Hollywood star of the 1940s who married Charlie Chaplin and co-starred in his film Modern Times, died Monday at her Swiss home aged 84. Authorities in the village of Porto Ronco near Ascona, where she had lived since 1969, said she died of natural causes. The slim, dark Goddard, was married four times — to wealthy Englishman Edgar James, Chaplin, actor Burgess Meredith and author Erich Maria Remarque. She was said to have kept her engagement rings on a necklace.

Australia sells 50 Mirage jets to Pakistan

SYDNEY (R) — Australia will sell 50 mothballed Mirage jets to Pakistan for \$6 million dollars (\$27 million), Minister for Defence Robert Ray said Tuesday. The jets have been protected from corrosion in three hangars on the edge of the Woomera Rocket Range in south Australia. The French-designed fighter jets, costing 1.5 million dollars (\$1.1 million) each when new, were in service from the early 1960s until November, 1987, when they began to be mothballed and replaced by the F-18. They were never used in war. Ray said in a statement the Mirages were offered for sale in August, 1988, and negotiations with Pakistan had been in progress since last year. The Pakistan Air Force already operates Mirage aircraft similar to those bought in Australia, he said.

Lagos airport reopens after coup attempt

LAGOS (R) — International flights to and from the Nigerian capital have resumed after being suspended following an unsuccessful coup attempt, a Lagos airport official said Tuesday.

Forces loyal to President Ibrahim Babangida Sunday crushed the attempt by disgruntled junior officers to seize power in Africa's most populous nation.

Nigeria's military rulers said four people were killed in the attempt which had backing from wealthy and powerful people.

Colonel Anthony Ukpok, principal staff officer to Babangida, told a news conference Monday that 10 officers and more than 150 lower ranks had been arrested.

The rebels had the "active support of people outside the military," Ukpok said at a news conference at Dodan Barracks, Babangida's base which was attacked during Sunday's attempt.

He did not identify them but said: "these people are rich. They are powerful."

He said the coup leaders' motives were selfish or sectional, adding: "Their objective was not to take over government but to kill and maim those they probably have grudges against."

The authorities had found an operations base at Ikorodu outside the city stocked with rifles, pistols, ammunition and vehicles, Ukpok said.

Those involved in the attempted takeover received gifts or promises of cash and cars to take part, he added.

Ukpok said at least four people were killed in skirmishes at the barracks and two other military locations in the capital.

He did not identify the dead but Babangida has said his personal bodyguard was among those killed.

Those arrested included Major Gideon Orkar who made a radio broadcast claiming to represent people of the south and middle belt regions against the traditionally dominant north.

Ukpok said court martial proceedings should start next week. Eleven officers were still being sought.

8 kidnappers, 1 hostage killed in Medellin

BOGOTA (AP) — Eight kidnappers and a hostage were killed, but police rescued another hostage in two operations in Medellin, a police communiqué said.

In one operation, police rescued Diego Barrientos without injury, shot and killed three of the persons who had abducted him and captured three others. The communiqué gave no further details.

In another operation, hostage Carlos Sierra, the manager of a brick making firm, was killed by his captors when police attacked, the police communiqué said.

Police shot and killed five kidnappers, the communiqué said.

Medellin has suffered a wave of kidnappings of business leaders and other wealthy citizens in recent months. Authorities have blamed many of the abductions on drug traffickers.

The Medellín drug cartel has declared war on the country's political and economic elite in retaliation for a government anti-drug crackdown that began last August.

As part of the crackdown, President Virgilio Barco decreed a policy of extraditing Colombian

drug suspects for trial in the United States. The traffickers often escaped justice at home by bribing or threatening court workers.

The Colombian Justice Ministry most recently ordered the extraditions of Rafael Julian Acosta, authorities said Monday. The government has already extradited 15 suspects as part of the crackdown, and is holding 15 others awaiting extradition.

More than 230 people have been killed in attacks blamed on drug traffickers in the last eight months.

Meanwhile a state government said it will pay fishermen for each body they retrieve from a river that runs through a region dominated by drug traffickers and leftist guerrillas.

Three victims who had been pulled from the Cauca River in the southern Valle state were buried Sunday.

Hours later the Valle government said a reward would be paid to fishermen who recover any other bodies near the town of Trujillo, 298 kilometres west of Bogota.

The town has been wracked by

violence in recent weeks. Unidentified groups have kidnapped 16 people, including the town's priest, the Rev. Tibério Fernandez.

The government, which said the amount of the reward will be announced later, made the offer after fishermen reported seeing several bodies floating down river.

Relatives of the buried men said they had been kidnapped on April 13 by a group of men dressed in military uniforms and carrying a black flag.

Meanwhile more violence was reported in the northern state of Cordoba, where 26 bodies have been found on property belonging to a Medellín cartel member.

At least 13 leftist guerrillas and three soldiers have been killed in fighting in five states since Friday, an army communiqué said.

Seven people were killed by a group of unidentified men in the town of San Carlos, 475 kilometres north of Bogota, police said Monday. A woman was kidnapped by the group, which fled after the Sunday attack, police said.

The attack was similar to others carried out by right-wing

death squads in the region. The squads were organised by large landowners, including drug traffickers, to rid the region of leftist guerrillas and their suspected sympathisers.

One of the most active squads is allegedly led by Fidel Castano, a landowner linked to the Medellín cartel, according to authorities.

In recent weeks, authorities have found 26 bodies buried in common graves on one of Castano's farms in the Valle state.

Several of the bodies have been identified as belonging to peasants kidnapped in January by a death squad in the northern town of Puerto Bello.

In the last two weeks a special army brigade organised to fight leftist guerrillas has killed over 30 rebels in fighting in Cordoba.

Authorities say the insurgents finance their activities in the region by kidnapping hundreds of ranchers each year and releasing them in exchange for huge ransoms.

The leader of the only leftist group that has laid down its arms offered late Sunday to mediate between rebels and ranchers.



Liz Taylor in serious condition

SANTA MONICA, California (AP) — Elizabeth Taylor is in serious condition following surgery to determine the cause of pneumonia that has kept the actress hospitalised for more than two weeks, her doctors said. "She is seriously ill and on Sunday underwent a lung biopsy to further determine the cause of her pneumonia," Miss Taylor's doctors said in a news release Monday. "After surgery, her breathing is now being assisted by a ventilator." Her condition is presently stabilising and her physicians are pleased with her progress. "The actress was moved to the intensive care unit of St. John's Hospital and Health Centre on Friday, the release said, without elaborating on her deteriorating health. "It is serious, but they are really pleased with her progress," said Miss Taylor's publicist, Chen Sam.

Oldest Swiss dies at age 109

PULLY, Switzerland (AP) — Switzerland's oldest citizen, Suzanne Monney-Perrin, is dead at age 109. Mrs. Monney-Perrin died Sunday night at a home for the aged, the director of the home said. A passionate reader, she consumed more than 60 books a year before her eyesight failed when she was 106. But she retained her interest in day-to-day affairs and had a newspaper read to her every day. Director Pierre Vermeil said. A native French speaker, she surprised well-wishers on her 104th birthday with a speech in German, a language she had hardly spoken since learning it as a young woman, he said. She lived most of the first half of the century in Marseille where her husband had been transferred. After his death in the 1940s she returned to Switzerland.

Film society honours Jimmy Stewart

NEW YORK (AP) — Actor Jimmy Stewart was honoured for his wonderful life in film, a career that spanned more than 50 years and brought the lanky star with the gentle drawl two Academy Awards. "I'm just grateful to you all," Stewart said Monday night after the film society of Lincoln Centre presented its "tribute to James Stewart. It's so much more than I ever dreamed of," said the 81-year-old Stewart. "I ask God to bless all of you. And when he takes your lives into his editing room, I pray that he will be as kind to each of you as you've been to me tonight."

La Scala breaks Callas wall of fear with new Traviata

MILAN (R) — The La Scala opera house finally broke away from a legacy of fear left by the late Maria Callas when it staged its first production in 26 years of Giuseppe Verdi's "La Traviata." The triumphant performance of Callas in the leading role had overshadowed all her successors. "The wall of fear between La Scala and Traviata has crumbled at last," La Scala chief administrator Carlo Maria Badini